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ROTHERHAM L.P.—Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Application forms from the **Secretary, Rotherham Labour Party, 12a The Crofts, Moor-gate, Rotherham**, to whom they must be returned not later than February 5th, 1949.

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ALL SET FOR 1949

AS 1948 drew to its close, the great task of redistribution had, with but few exceptions, been smoothly and successfully completed. It was not a spectacular achievement, but one calling for endless patience and forbearance, co-operation and goodwill. It was, indeed, as the National Agent has said, a tribute to the helpful spirit shown by "everyone from the most humble party worker to the Member of Parliament". The job completed, the way is clear for the intensive campaigns ahead.

Already this year's municipal elections loom large on the horizon. They will be a stiff test but our record is a proud one, and the vital need is to see that it is put across as forcefully and convincingly as possible. From now on the all-important battle of 1950 will be ever before us. In all the hard work of preparation, our goal must be victory in 1950. This year is our opportunity by propaganda, education and membership drives, meetings and literature distribution, to see that we face the General Election fully equipped.

This year is our opportunity for really intensive membership campaigns. An individual membership of only one in 19 of those who voted Labour in 1945 is just not good enough. The Party's target of one million members or approximately one in 12 of the 1945 vote can and should be reached by 1950. So, too, can the League of Youth's target of 100,000 members or one in 10 of the Party's individual membership.

February 1 is D-Day for our women's campaign, and in every Division this should prove a valuable aid to recruitment and to arousing interest in the spring election campaigns. An intensive canvass remains the most effective way of increasing Party membership.

"Our job is to bring the people in, not wait for them to arrive."

How to Organise a Meeting

By D. F. ALGER, Labour Party Propaganda Officer

MEETINGS are, of course, of many kinds. This article will be concerned with the ordinary public meeting, the purpose of which is to explain some aspects of Labour policy and to answer questions upon it. I shall assume that the meeting is designed to attract electors of all types and not merely a group with specialised interests. Most of what I shall say will be elementary. Nevertheless, the elements of the matter are of such importance and so often neglected that they deserve repetition.

The first essential is to obtain a *competent* speaker. Too often it is assumed that a meeting cannot be successful unless the speaker's name is a household word. But it is wrong to assume that the mere name of the speaker will guarantee success. Moreover, the great majority of meetings are of necessity addressed by the lesser stars of the political firmament. A moment's reflection will prove that it is physically impossible for the major stars to shine everywhere; there are too few of them.

The important point is to secure a speaker who is capable of dealing with the subject of the meeting. However large or small the audience, it is vital that the speaker should be able to present a convincing case. To the extent that he or she does this, the meeting will be successful.

Mobilise your Audience

Whoever the speaker may be, the meeting must be *organised*. It is asking for failure merely to trust that a few posters will attract an audience. Audiences must be *mobilised*. This is a task which, though demanding no great skill, needs patience, energy and concentrated effort.

So begin by getting the posters (clear, simple and attractive in design) fixed on the best available sites. Let these posters be up for a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting. Then do as much as possible of the following:

(1) Notify all members and all branches and affiliated organisations of the meeting and send them small supplies of notices for distribution.

(2) Get the names and addresses of non-members of the Party who are likely to be interested in the particular subject of the meeting and send them personal invitations to attend.

(3) Get both an advertisement and a news paragraph about the meeting in the local newspapers, stressing the attractiveness of the subject and the qualifications of the speaker.

(4) Arrange a house-to-house distribution of handbills to advertise the meeting.

(5) If you possess a loudspeaker, use it for intensive advertisement both on the day of the meeting and on the day preceding the meeting.

(6) Get a group of active workers on the two days before the meeting to call upon as many known supporters or sympathisers as possible, giving them a personal invitation to be present. (Every Local Party should keep an up-to-date list of such supporters or sympathisers.)

Personal Service

From long experience I find that (2) and (6) are invaluable methods of mobilising an audience. It goes without saying that they must be intensively applied. But all the suggested methods are useful. It will be noted that several of them demand personal service rather than the expenditure of money. Such service is indispensable if the audiences of our dreams are to be secured. Other methods may suggest themselves in districts which have their own peculiarities. We should adapt our methods to these peculiarities without abandoning either the principles of our Party or the canons of sound organisation.

Our main object must be to ensure that every person in the district is aware that a meeting will be held and that he or she will be welcomed. Let me repeat: audiences must be mobilised. We must bring the people in, not wait for them to arrive.

In the conduct of the meeting itself, other simple points should be carefully observed. The arrangements should combine efficiency with friendliness.

Many British halls (even some of the largest) are drab and uncomfortable. But some elements of charm and comfort lie in our own hands. Therefore make sure that the seats are tidily arranged and easy of access and have a few smart stewards to welcome the electors and show them to their seats. In cold weather ensure if possible that the hall is reasonably warm. (What agonies we have suffered in freezing halls, often unnecessarily!) Have a bright cloth on the chairman's table and flowers or other decorations either on the table or on the platform (but not so placed that they will embarrass the speaker!)

Display Your Literature

Have a literature stall in a prominent place and put an attractive and persuasive person in charge of it. Put a few good posters or pictures wherever they can best be seen. Set a special table near the platform for representatives of the press and introduce the speaker to these representatives before the meeting opens. (Such small courtesies pay large dividends!) In short, however dismal the hall, make the setting of the meeting as pleasant as possible.

Above all, consult both chairman and speaker before the meeting and fix the agenda. Ensure that chairman, speaker, and one or two supporting officials go on the platform together and that the meeting starts to time. Be certain that the chairman is properly briefed on the nature of the meeting and on such personal information about the speaker as will arouse the interest of the audience. Ensure that the chairman opens the meeting crisply and does not omit to mention the literature and the collection.

Value of Question Time

After the speaker's address, let the chairman or one of his platform supporters appeal for a collection. (Never, except for very special reasons, omit this.) Allow a reasonable time for the collection, not only in order to get the money in but also in order that the audience may relax for conversation. Then let questions be taken. Here the chairman should guide the meeting in such a way that, without allowing members of the audience to make speeches, he gives them reasonable latitude to make their questions clear.

Question time can, if efficiently handled, be the most valuable part of the meeting. This is the real test of

the competence of the speaker (of which, of course, the organiser has assured himself beforehand!) In case questions flag, arrange for one or two Party members to put useful questions.

Finally, unless votes of thanks have been previously arranged, let the chairman close the meeting with a glowing word of thanks to the audience and to all who have helped to make the event a success.

Granted the competence of the speaker, the effectiveness of the publicity before the meeting, and the charm and efficiency of the arrangements in the hall, the occasion is bound to be successful. A good audience will have been collected; pleasure and knowledge will have been spread abroad; and, here and there, a conviction of the ability of our Party and the soundness of its policy will have been planted in the minds of wavering electors.

In a word, the careful preparation—the mobilisation and organisation—will have brought their reward. Those responsible will be justly proud of their efforts. Party morale will have been raised, and Party prestige increased.

Let the process be repeated at regular (but not foolishly frequent) intervals by the systematic use of the same methods. Thus will be created a tradition of attractive meetings which the public will gladly attend.

"Our business," said William Morris, "is the making of Socialists." Let us not forget that it is a business and that it can only be successful if we adopt business-like methods.

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Bring in the "Absent Voters"

By JOHN PINKERTON

For the first time, certain people will be allowed to vote by post in this year's local government elections. Here John Pinkerton details the classes affected by this new provision.

LOCAL parties throughout the whole country will be meeting to consider their election campaign, and no doubt committees of one sort or another will have been appointed to consider election policy and the need for various officers to be appointed, each one being given a specific task.

An additional officer should, I believe, be appointed now that postal voting has been extended to Local Government elections (with the exception of Rural District and Parish). That is a Registration Officer in each local party and ward, whose duty would be confined to seeing that all persons entitled to be registered are registered and that all those unable to go to poll in person are registered as absent voters.

As the present register, which was published on October 15, is the one on which the spring elections will be fought, it is now too late to secure the inclusion of any person in that register, but persons entitled to go on the absent voters' list can be dealt with, and officers should make themselves familiar with the provisions in the Act concerning this.

These provisions will come into force in time for the spring elections, and the persons entitled to vote by post are:

(a) *those unable to vote in person by reason of their occupation, service or employment.*

(b) *those unable to vote in person by reason of blindness or physical incapacity.*

The words "physical incapacity" mean an incapacity which is permanent or temporary. So that any person confined in hospital or to his bed by reason of illness can claim to be regarded as an absent voter.

Time to Examine Claims

There must, of course, be time given to the Town Clerk to examine these claims, list them, prepare the postal ballot papers and despatch them to the voters, so a time limit has been set for the receipt of applications, which must be on the official form provided by the Town Clerk.

The form contains space for the person's name and address, the reason for his or her inability to go to vote in person, and in the case of physically incapacitated persons a certificate to be completed by a doctor.

An application to be placed on the absent voters' list must reach the Town Clerk not later than the day of the publication of notice of election, which is the twentieth day before the day of election. It is impossible to give precise dates as many election days have not yet been determined, and in any case they vary from county to county.

The form referred to will not yet be available at your Town Hall, but it will be in good time for the election.

In preparation, a complete examination of the Register should be made and all those persons who are permanently incapacitated or are blind should be marked so that forms can be taken to them for completion as soon as they are available.

Inform the Unions

Inform all your affiliated trade union branches of these provisions, particularly those unions catering for workers whose employment takes them away from home for periods such as long distance transport drivers, engine drivers, firemen and guards, builders who have to leave their homes before the opening of the poll, and who will not be back home before the closing of the poll. Many of these workers know their rotas of duty some weeks in advance, and if they are going to be away on polling day they should take advantage of the postal vote.

It might be argued that a person who is ill and confined to bed before the day of the publication of notice of election may be well and able to vote in person on the actual polling day. This is a matter which will have to be left to the Doctor, since he will not certify the application in such an eventuality. He will only certify such application if in his opinion the person will be unable to vote in person.

I have not yet mentioned members of His Majesty's Forces or Seamen, or

(Continued at foot of page 7)

Our Growing Labour Press

DUDLEY "New Citizen" celebrated its second birthday in September, and is a bright, healthy child. Its income exceeds its expenses by about £1 a month—"Result," as Mr. Micawber said, "happiness." By sending its own shorthand reporter to all Council Meetings it is able to give a very full and fair report of proceedings to counteract the distortions in the opposition Press; regular features are given covering local sport, drama, as well as gardening, books, art gallery news, weddings, industrial notes and local Party news. In lay-out and style it compares favourably with any local newspaper we have seen. Its publicity is enterprising—for two years they have run a darts competition for all teams in the borough with great success. The editor justifiably says: "We are proud of our local paper."

(Continued from page 6)

wives of members of the Forces who have left their qualifying addresses to visit their husbands. These voters will only be entitled to vote by proxy as absent voters provided they have a proxy already appointed in respect of Parliamentary Elections. There is no special provision for the appointment of a proxy for Local Government Elections. The present register will indicate whether a voter has such a proxy appointed.

Our main concern is to see that all those entitled to vote by post take advantage of the provision. This is a task which calls for adequate preparation and care, but it is a job which will be infinitely worth while.

The vote of every Labour sympathiser must be polled. There will be many such sympathisers in your area who will be covered by these new provisions. Make sure that they use them by seeing they get the necessary forms, and return them within the required time limit.

HENLEY Division is largely rural, and is therefore a particularly tough proposition for a Labour paper. But the "Democrat" is doing great things. In one village where there are "roughly 100 dwelling-places—to call them all houses would not be true—our paper is delivered to 50." That's the spirit. Good luck, Henley "Democrat."

* * *

BIRKENHEAD have turned over from a duplicated sheet to a four-page printed monthly, of which they hope to publish 10,000 copies. They are selling at a 1d. to their members and distributing the rest free. It is a brave effort.

* * *

THOSE of our local journals who have invited the newsagents to assist in their distribution on a commercial basis have usually received courteous co-operation. There are individual exceptions, however. The Worthing "Labour News" publishes this response from a trader in their locality:

"Dear Sir,—I was amazed to receive yours re 'Labour News'. Surely no shopkeeper in his senses would support the present Government of cranks, Jews, conchies and the like. They would like everything on the Co-op. principle. The Jew, Shinwell, cost our trade a pretty penny with his inefficient bungling of the coal crisis. Now this verminous lout Bevan comes along and sets us back another £1 or more a week, according to our staff. Nothing is done to help the traders, but everything is done for the so-called 'workers'. A lazy lot, too, with their five-day week. It would do them good to have to work newsagents' hours, a 6½-day week."



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Union Membership is Rising

By L. H. M. HILLIARD, General Secretary, Agents' Union

I SUPPOSE that with the year drawing to a close, most of us are engaged in clearing up outstanding work and in planning development activity in the New Year with a special eye to the elections of next spring.

It is interesting to note that the Party's agency development plans are now beginning to show results and that Union membership is rising, although not at the rate we anticipated. Indeed, it seems unlikely that the expansion we expected when discussing this subject at last year's conference will be realised this year. Despite this, however, agency service is reaching a new high level and the Executive is hopeful that much of this advance will be maintained and that the new appointments will be consolidated.

Steps now being taken to build up the service are obviously short-term ones with the General Election in mind. The Union, however, is continuing to give time and thought to long-term proposals which, in its view, will produce an organising network on a nation-wide basis offering reasonable conditions of employment and a fair measure of security to its personnel.

Welcome to New Members

It would, I think, be fitting at this stage to offer a welcome to all those new members who have recently joined us and to assure them that the Union will watch their progress with interest. May I suggest that attendance, whenever possible, at Branch meetings will be of use to them and remind them that their colleagues will always be ready with advice and help should they run into difficulties?

That brings me to another point. By rule, members are under an obligation to advise the General Secretary of changes of address or appointment. This information is needed for obvious reasons. Could I ask Union members to co-operate in this way? It will help us considerably if they would do so.

Our "Right to Speak"

Progress is sometimes very slow. Reading over old Annual Reports of the Union I find that as early as the sixth Annual Conference of this Union delegates were pressing for the "Right to Speak" at the Party Conference. In

recent months this issue has been the subject of discussion at Adjustment Board level and it has been suggested that if this were granted conference would be unduly delayed and that in any case accommodation is insufficient. The Union view was, and is, that conference would gain by the proposal to allow Agents to attend *ex-officio*, on the same terms as M.P.s. We have failed to gain our point, however, the N.E.C. having indicated that they could not agree to our proposals. On the other hand, our suggestion that Agents attending conference should be brought into the "pooled fares" scheme has met with some success and this matter is now being considered at an administrative level.

No progress has, as yet, been made with the Union's proposals for a "subsistence allowance" at by-elections, but the matter is under consideration and I hope to be able to report favourably soon.

Before the year ends there is something which all our members must do. Please check to see that your contributions for the current year are cleared. The Union's financial year ends on December 31st and we don't want to carry arrears over.

All Districts have to render complete returns to the General Secretary within 14 days of this date and unless you contact your Financial Secretary within this time you will be reported as being in arrears. So remember that you have been warned.

On this point, it is encouraging to note that we now have fewer "in and out" members, as the late General Secretary used to call them, and that on the whole contributions are paid regularly and without serious difficulty in collection.

Compliments of the Season

Finally, on behalf of the Union Executive Committee, I would like to wish all our members all possible success in the New Year, send them all our greetings, and express the hope that their efforts and devoted service to the movement which we have the honour to serve, will result in resounding victories next spring when we seek the mandate of the people once again.

Readers' Forum

Come on, Chairmen!

The records mentioned in the *Labour Organiser* of Wards and Parties who have faced up to the problem of increased membership is most encouraging, but, throughout the country there are many areas where leadership is not given sufficiently—if at all.

Some time ago I wrote to a certain Ward where membership was small, offering to help in the canvass, if the Chairman would come with me; he was horrified at my suggestion.

In every Ward in the country, if the Chairman and Secretary at least will say, "Come on," instead of "Go on," results will be surprising.

Of course they will say "I haven't the time," but that really means they are happier taking the Chair, or making a speech—of course they could cut present commitments.

But I suggest, Mr. Editor, we only grow in knowledge and understanding if we face up to facts and act on that knowledge; and in every Ward we want that membership.

To spread our gospel, besides public meetings of all kinds, the visiting of people in their homes, getting to know them personally, greeting them in the street is called for, and believe me, no one's education is near completion until you know people on a friendly basis.

G. H. NIGHTINGALE,
(Vice-Chairman,

Sanderstead Ward, South Croydon)

Should Question Time be Planned?

As a delegate to a recent meeting in Manchester addressed by Sir Stafford Cripps and as one who failed to catch the chairman's eye, I would like to suggest that at future conferences a planned question time be arranged.

Delegates wishing to ask questions should notify the Secretary beforehand of their intentions without, of course, announcing the content of their questions and thus avoiding prepared answers.

At the meeting to which I refer, it was quite obvious that the Cheshire delegates were very unfortunate in not getting a hearing, while the Liverpool District were very much on their feet.

While I agree that the problems of Merseyside warrant every attention, it is essential that difficulties confronting

all districts should be heard as far as possible.

If a more equitable distribution of questions had been allowed, say two from each district, I am sure it would have helped towards a better understanding of the feelings of our Movement in the Lancashire and Cheshire Region.

W. J. DUTTON, Secretary,
Nantwich L.L.P.

It's No Good, Chum

I should like through our Readers' Forum to suggest to those D.L.P.s who send out books of draw tickets to other D.L.P.s that we've all got our financial difficulties, and most of us run our own Christmas, Grand National, Derby, etc., etc., draws. Therefore, although I find their letters very touching and all that, as far as I am personally concerned it's N.B.G. and they may as well cross my name off their lists, and save stamps.

V. S. E. FOOKES,
Central Norfolk D.L.P.

Brighter Ward Meetings

We started an experiment early this year which many parties may find helpful, and I have to say our members are enthusiastic about it.

At every meeting we put on the agenda: "Discussion of Current Affairs."

On opening the meeting the Chairman asks for the subject of the evening. If more than one subject is put up, the meeting decides, and at the time appointed — we use time immediately after correspondence, but that could be varied according to the requirements of each body — the comrade who put up the subject speaks on the question for five minutes, after which the question is open to any member who desires to contribute up to a maximum of three minutes.

Any matter considered of importance is put up, local and national, and 30 minutes is allowed for the purpose. We find this measure most successful, and the business of the Party is carried through as efficiently as ever in my experience in the Party.

J. A. KEMP,
Hon. Sec.,
Little Ilford Ward,
North East Ham L.P.

Coats off for the general election 3

OUR PLAN

CLAUSEWITZ pointed to the close connection between war and politics. There is certainly a great similarity between the conflict of rival armies and the electoral struggles of opposing political parties.

The outcome of an election can have as far-reaching effects on the future of a country as the winning of a battle.

Elections should be planned just as carefully as a battle and many lessons can be drawn from the exponents of the art of war by those who engage in political conflicts.

General Staff Prepare Plan

The plan of a military campaign is the responsibility of the General Staff. Having set the objective to be achieved, the technical requirements of success are carefully worked out and the strategical plan is prepared. The Officers commanding in the field apply the plan to the circumstances with which they have to contend, and it should be sufficiently elastic in character to enable them to make tactical adaptations to meet each problem as it comes along.

A political party entering an election should have its own General Staff to set the objective and to prepare the plan of campaign. The objective cannot be the same in each case. What can be achieved depends on a whole host of factors including, among other things, the resources available, the strength of the opposing forces and the nature of the constituency (the terrain).

Tactics Will Vary

To drop the military terminology, this may mean that in an area where a Local Government election is being fought more seats can be won by concentrating on the more favourable Wards and not contesting the difficult Wards. On the other hand, it may well be that by engaging our opponents in every Ward they are compelled to disperse their forces, so enabling a

Labour victory in the favourable and marginal Wards.

In such a case, it should be possible to transfer workers from one Ward to another at a crucial stage in the fight, just as troops are moved on the battlefield.

Equally important as *where* to attack is *when* to attack. Many battles have been lost because the timing was wrong: so have many elections.

Experience indicates that six or seven days before Polling Day is the time to launch the all-out offensive in Parliamentary elections, and in local elections a day or two later.

by **A. L. William**

- Here the Assistant military analogy to for the successful wa

A further article in this series readers to send in their view

There must not be any letting-up after that. The onslaught must be sustained right up to the last minute of polling day.

None of this is possible without a decision being taken on the objective of the campaign and adequate preparations to reach that objective. Normally in Local Government elections the winning of the maximum number of seats is the sole objective. The coming elections possibly will have another objective in addition.

CAMPAIGN

Parties may wish to regard the Spring elections as a rehearsal for the General Election 1950, in which the new troops are tried out and the organisation is tested under battle conditions.

The Election General Staff should be a special sub-committee, or the Executive Committee, if that body is not too large. After it has decided on the general plan it should give to specially qualified persons the job of working out the details.

There may be a journalist member who could prepare the material for the posters, leaflets, broadsheet, address, etc. A printer or a commercial artist

*nal Agent uses interesting
te the tactics and strategy
ut of an electoral campaign.*

*ear next month. We again urge our
all-important subject.*

might be found to help with proposed layouts.

A scheme for the display of posters and the distribution of literature would need to be worked out. Someone would have to draw up a programme of meetings, both indoor and outdoor. Then proposals relating to transport and for Committee Rooms and their staffing would have to be considered.

The recruitment, organisation, equipment and training of canvassers and "knockers up," the P.B.I. of the elec-

tion troops, is a task requiring special attention.

Unlike Generals in charge of armies during a modern war, those in charge of elections have to think a great deal about money. But even Generals have only limited resources in men and material, and planning a military campaign entails the allocation of resources according to the needs of the situation and the aim that has been set.

The relating of all means to the desired end is the very essence of a properly organised election campaign. If this is not done there is no real campaign, but only isolated guerilla actions which may annoy the enemy, but will not defeat him.

Working To Plan

Therefore, everything about a campaign, not excluding policy declarations, should relate to the agreed objective. If candidates, agents, and other key workers know they are expected to work to a carefully thought out plan they will co-operate in achieving its purpose.

Working to plan does not mean that there is no scope for initiative and originality. No plan can cover every detail, or anticipate every eventuality.

Even where there is highly centralised direction, a great deal of autonomy must be left to the Wards. The important thing is that the multitudinous activities of all concerned do contribute to the securing of the end in view.

It is no use starting to plan the campaign a week or two before the election, as that can only result in hurried improvisation. The Election Committee must set to work early. Planning will be the key to success in 1949 and 1950.

Challenge that Tory Lie!

By ANTONY FLEW, Press Officer, Oxford University Labour Club

Too often those phoney facts and shaky arguments are left unchallenged in your local Press. Here are some tips on how best to give Labour's answer.

PEOPLE so often say "I felt like writing to the papers about it." Sometimes, of course, they actually do. More often they don't. But if more Labour people would write, and write more often, I am certain the gain would be enormous.

Now it is almost a dead loss to write to the national Press. Even those which do try to be fair to Labour—and they are not a lot—get so many letters that the chances of yours being printed are very slender. But local papers are different. For one thing, they receive far fewer letters. For another, especially when they are real local papers and not merely tentacles of the same Kemsley octopus, they are much more willing to print letters from a Labour point of view.

Here is our chance. Too often phoney facts are left unchallenged. Shaky arguments are allowed to totter by just because none of us takes the opportunity to knock them flat. Every time we leave a Tory lie unchallenged, we risk that another voter will be fooled. Elections are lost at the margins, and marginal floating voters are just the ones most open to Tory say-anything - often-enough-and-some-one-will-believe-you propaganda.

Ten Tips of the Trade

If we are to out-think and out-write the Tories, our stuff must be good. So here are ten tips of the trade which may help Labour people in tackling the Tories on the Press front.

First, and most important, never leave them with an opening for a comeback. It is much better to make only one point and be unanswerably right than to say a lot and make one mistake. If a single one of your points is proved wrong, the whole effect of all your other sound ones will be lost. This is especially true if you try sarcasm. You will look a complete fool and do the Party no good if you are very sarcastic about something but leave an opening for a crushing comeback. In a nutshell, "When in doubt, leave it out."

Second, deal with only one subject

per letter. If a basic petrol boy and one of the shrieking fur-clad haridans of the Grousewives' League have both been on the warpath on the same day, choose the one you can deal with most effectively, and regretfully leave the other to be licked another day.

Third, don't try to be eloquent or sarcastic unless you can do it really well, and even then remember that the argument is the main thing. But you may find it fun to keep a store of "phrasemongery"—a list of pungent, juicy phrases. If so, jot down ideas on a sheet of paper and don't hesitate to loot good ones from other people.

Keep Your English Simple

Fourth, try to put your points in forthright, athletic English. If you write like a caricature of a civil servant, you won't get published, or, if you do, you won't be read or convince that chap whose vote we've got to have. Never use a long, abstract word when a short concrete one will do. "To raise production to the maximum" really is not better English than "to make more." "In order to the completion of" is not better than "to finish."

Fifth, it is good to have a newsy twist or a bright phrase—something to make the headline and to make sure that yours is the letter the editor chooses. For this "phrasemongery" comes in handy.

Sixth, in hammering an opponent, always quote his exact words. It is fairer to him than paraphrasing, and far, far more effective.

Seventh, when choosing your tactics—sympathetic or annihilating, factual or dry—consider two things: the effect on your opponent and the effect on other readers. Clearly, when in doubt, consider the other readers. There are more of them! But don't be crushing with the man who is obviously puzzled or genuinely willing to learn. He's the man we can win over.

Eighth, you need—as every Party member needs—a copy of the new Speakers' Handbook. Use the index and turn up the relevant facts that

prove the Tory was wrong. I would suggest pasting extra cuttings on to the blank pages or putting them in an envelope. It is surprising how little you need to handle almost everything that ever turns up. Just watch out for the bricks dropped in local Tory speeches and short extracts from the "Herald" which might come in handy, and keep them handy.

Ninth, if you are developing an argument or refuting a lot of false statements, make your points clearly and relentlessly and without irrelevant emotion. Emotional orgies of muddle can safely be left to the Opposition.

That Sting in the Tail

Tenth, and last, try to put a sting in the tail, some slogan, snappy phrase or apt quotation.

These ten points should be enough to be going on with. And just to prove that it can be done I may say that 16 letters from members of our Club have been published in the local paper in the last five weeks. It all shows what a little energy and organisation can do.

Surely, this is the ideal Party job for people who for one reason or another are kept at home in the evenings.

Well, are we all set? Pen, ink, paper, envelopes and Speakers' Handbook. Now just look for some phoney facts and popular Tory fallacies being ventilated in the local rag. You won't have to look very far or very long. And then—Attack! Attack! Attack!

Our Delegate Conferences

By LEN HILL, Secretary, Abertillery D.L.P.

I was very interested in the article on "Talking it Over," by Billy Vaughan, of Aberavon ("L.O.," February) and offer him my congratulations. At the same time I would like to tell Billy his Divisional Party is not the only one which organises quarterly conferences. We have arranged such conferences for years; in fact it is one of our local arrangements that we hold four in a year. Quite recently we held one at Blaina, the top end of our constituency, with Morgan Phillips, the Secretary of the Party, as the chief speaker, and A. J. McWhinnie, of the "Daily Herald." The conference was attended by 240 delegates; 30 of these came as fraternal delegates from neighbouring constituencies, such as Monmouth, Pontypool, Ebbw Vale, etc.

Our conferences consist of two sessions. The first commences at 4 p.m., with a report by our own Member; we then take an interval at 5.15 for tea and we cater for all delegates and friends at 1/- each, our own people do the catering.

Happy Work

We then re-assemble at 6.30 p.m. with the guest speaker taking the evening session; the usual questions and discussion follow.

I do know the amount of work involved, but it is happy work. In fact,

I arranged for a similar conference at Newbridge in the lower end of the constituency, with Florence Hancock, chairman of the T.U.C., along with our Member, as speaker.

Some few months ago we had arranged a conference at Whitchurch, in the Monmouth constituency, at the same time making it an outing for our members. We booked two buses and 70 of our members were taking the trip; we had arranged with our friends in Monmouth to book the hall and to invite the local people to come along; unfortunately, the trip was cancelled by orders of the Traffic Commissioner, but we intend making similar arrangements this summer.

I think that other constituencies can do the same. Why not help our hard-pressed friends in constituencies which are held by Tories.

All other points made in the article are carried out by us, so I do not want Billy to have the idea that he is the only one who does that kind of work. We have had seven years of experience behind us, and we are still improving our machinery.

Perhaps Billy will support me at the next meeting of the Welsh Regional Council of Labour in a resolution calling upon all constituencies to do the same.

Take Care of Your Speaker

By **ELECTRICUS**

Here are some useful tips on how to keep your loudspeaker gear in efficient working order.

QUITE a lot of good advice has been given about the necessity for developing "microphone" technique. Much has been said about the "strategy" of loudspeaker use—how necessary it is to use loudspeakers at the right time and in the right way; to link them up with the canvassing and other features of the election campaign; and to adopt a scientific plan of "road coverage."

Most of us have probably experimented with these techniques for ourselves but what has impressed me, as a result of some years experience of the use of loudspeakers in election campaigns, has been the appalling lack of knowledge of the essential conditions for the satisfactory working of the equipment and quite often a complete disregard for makers' instructions.

Here are a few simple requirements necessary to ensure the successful functioning of loudspeaker equipment.

Nearly all modern sets for use on cars, vans, etc., derive their power from 6 or 12 volt car type batteries, the valve filaments being operated directly at this pressure and the high tension supply being obtained from the same source by means of a rotary or vibratory converter. Since the battery is the prime source of power, it is here that we should start.

Keep Your Battery Charged

Nothing suits a battery better than hard work. Regular use is good for it but unfortunately most Parties use their equipment only intermittently and this is tough going on the battery. If it is allowed to stand idle in a discharged condition for any length of time, it will sulphate and will be ruined.

The rule is "keep it charged" even when not in use at least once every three to four months. Better still, buy a "trickle charger" and keep it almost permanently on.

Keep the battery "topped up" with distilled water (just above the plates is O.K.) and the terminals clean and free from corrosion. A thick film of lanoline over these will help in preventing sulphation at the battery lugs.

If the amplifier fails to work, and the battery has been charged, is in appar-

ently good condition and all connections are sound, have a "Heavy Discharge Test" carried out on the battery. Voltmeters and hydrometers will not show up internal faults, dud cells, etc. When handling the battery treat it carefully. Shock and vibration can do real harm. Better still make a wooden case for it and treat this with acid resisting paint so as to give it protection.

Treat Your Amplifier Kindly

Amplifiers require little attention and are pretty reliable. Some are "fussy" about being stood the right way. If this is the case with yours, don't ill-treat it. It probably has a rotary converter which runs best in one position or "wet" electrolytic condensers which like being treated properly. When connecting up take your time. Most sets have foolproof plugs and sockets which make it impossible to connect wrongly but all are easily damaged by rough treatment. Don't pull the plugs out by the leads. This is the quickest and surest way to break connections.

Keep the battery well away from the amplifier, mike and speaker. Battery acid is a powerful corrosive and loves to feed on metal. Your amplifier won't be worth much if it gets to work on it.

The most frequent cause of breakdowns is a faulty lead. Good quality cables and flexes are employed but constant use and "kinking" plus advancing age and consequent deterioration of the insulation plays havoc with the best material.

DEADLINE

Don't forget the deadline for the receipt of all contributions — the 15th of the month for publication the following month.

That applies to advertisements as well as articles. Send them all to The Editor, Labour Organiser, Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1.

Let's hear what your Party is doing!

The New Appointments

New full-time agent for Chislehurst is Mr. HARRY ROGERS, who has been agent at North West Camberwell since April, 1948. Aged 43, he has been a Party member for 25 years and served as assistant agent for Eccles in the 1929 General Election and for Wallasey in 1945.

Mr. A. LEESE, aged 25, becomes full-time agent for Twickenham. He has held numerous offices in the Party, including that of Ward Secretary. A railway fireman by occupation, he has been chairman of his trade union branch for the past four years.

New full-time organiser for Newcastle City is Mr. J. E. GRIFFITHS, 46-year-old bus conductor, who has been an active Party member for 22 years. He will work under the direction of the Borough Secretary.

Mr. W. E. TOLTON, new full-time agent for Lowestoft, is 25 and has just completed two years' study at Ruskin College, Oxford. Before the war he

was employed as a clerk by the Leicester Branch of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives. Mr. Tolton has been active in the League of Youth.

Mr. PETER MICHELSON, new full-time agent for Eastbourne, is 25 years of age and has been a Party officer for the past four years. Since his demobilisation from the R.A.F. last year, he has been a stock control supervisor.

Mr. JOHN MURPHY, who has been agent at West Renfrew for the past three years, now becomes full-time agent for Keighley. He has helped at numerous Scottish by-elections since 1945 and has also had wide experience in local government elections. He is aged 45.

New full-time agent for East Edinburgh is Mr. JACK CAMPBELL, 27-year-old Co-operative Insurance Agent, who assisted in the 1945 General Election and at recent Scottish by-elections.



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"No Politics" Rule Was Proved Mistake

By EDWIN FURNESS, Secretary R.A.C.S., Political Purposes Committee

BY the close of the nineteenth century it was clear that the Co-operative Movement could never attain its social and economic objectives whilst directors of big business remain entrenched in Parliament and co-operators refrained from political action. Nevertheless, in 1899 the leaders of the Co-operative Movement refused an invitation to take part in the formation of a workers' political party, the Labour Party.

As late as 1914 the Dublin Co-operative Congress instructed the Central Board of the Union:—"Strictly to observe in spirit as well as in letter the resolution of the Aberdeen Congress, 1913, to maintain the neutrality of the Movement in respect of party politics, not to join in conferences with political parties, not to be officially represented at gatherings of political parties, and not to employ Co-operative men or money to the advancement of the Labour Party or political organisations or movements."

Following the outbreak of war in 1914, the Co-operative Movement received from the Government the treatment it had invited—it was victimised in the interests of its capitalist competitors. Feeling in Co-operative circles ran high in what was felt to be unfair discrimination against societies in the administration of Food Control, Conscription, and the threat of Penal Taxation. From this atmosphere the Co-operative Congress in 1917 resolved to establish its own political department with the organisation of a Co-operative Party.

Political Action

In these circumstances the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society, at the March, 1920, General Meeting, resolved that "the principle of political representation should be embodied in the rules of the Society," and that a special committee of twelve persons be appointed to propose the necessary amendment to the existing rules. Eight members were elected at the next half-yearly meetings in September, 1920, two were appointed by the General

Committee, and two by the Education Committee.

This Special Committee found that the need for Co-operative representation in Parliament and on Local Authorities was continually becoming more apparent. Having to face the issue whether this end should be sought through combination with other democratic movements by affiliation to the Labour Party or separately by affiliation to the newly-formed Co-operative Party, they unanimously recommended the former course.

Political Fund Started

The Committee also recommended unanimously the creation of a political fund, by a levy of 3d. per member each half-year, to be taken from the trading surplus, of which one penny should be devoted to the payment of affiliation fees to the local Labour Parties within the Society's area. The other twopence to be expended on such political aims as may be of benefit to the R.A.C.S. Provision was made for members who objected to political work to contract out of having 3d. credited to the Political Fund.

These proposals were all endorsed and embodied in the rules of the Society, together with an arrangement to elect a Political Purposes Committee, constituted as the Special Committee for the administration of the Political Fund.

From the beginning, the Political Purposes Committee of the R.A.C.S. has aimed at the steady building up of Labour Party organisation during intervals between elections, than at special efforts during elections; and particularly at strengthening Co-operative influence within the Labour parties of the 29 Parliamentary divisions of the Society's trading area.

Labour Party Affiliation

In addition to affiliating to each local Labour Party, the Political Purposes Committee has been affiliated to the London Labour Party from 1922, to the national Labour Party from 1927, to the Co-operative Party from 1930 and to the Southern Regional

Council of the Labour Party from 1947. Five members of the Society are entitled to attend Labour Party Management Committee meetings, two of whom serve on the Party executive committee. The Political Committee also has representatives serving on the Executive Committees of the National Labour Party, the London Labour Party, the Southern Regional Council of the Labour Party, the London Labour Party Women's Advisory Committee and the Standing Joint Committee of Working Women's Organisations.

All R.A.C.S. Co-operative Guilds can be affiliated to either the London Labour Party or, if outside the L.C.C. area, to their local constituency Labour Party, fees being paid out of the Society's Political Purposes Fund.

Grants are available for members of the Society who are placed on the Local Government or Parliamentary Panel and selected as candidates by a Labour Party within the area.

In the 1945 General Election, out of the 29 Parliamentary Divisions in the R.A.C.S. trading area 27 Labour Members of Parliament were returned, including four directly sponsored by the Political Purposes Committee.

Political Education

Quarterly conferences, to which the committee invites all the Society's public representatives and delegates to the local Labour Parties, delegates from Co-operative Guilds, members of all the R.A.C.S. statutory committees, and from time to time Party agents and special speakers, are held on Saturday afternoons for mutual consultation.

One representative from each Party is invited to give a brief report of local work and progress. Suggestions for future developments mooted on the Political Purposes Committee are brought up for discussion. The conferences have undoubtedly helped to increase Co-operative membership and are of great assistance in promoting the unity and efficiency of the Labour Movement.

Political activity has proved in this South London Co-operative Society to be an asset and not a burden.

In 1922 when a political fund was established, the membership was 95,818 with annual sales of £2,861,063, which by 1948 had grown to a membership of 336,877, and annual sales of over 14 million pounds sterling. In

1924, 2,405 members out of 100,565 members objected to the allocation of 6d. from the trading surplus to political work on their behalf. In 1948 with a largely increased membership, only 1,100 members objected out of a total membership of 336,877. The resources for political work have increased from £1,137 in 1922 to the amount of £8,386 os. 6d. in 1948.

Main Political Aims

The Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society for thirty years has been active in political work, with four main objects: (1) To make the most effective use of the political power of the Society; (2) To secure representation in Parliament and on Local Government Authorities; (3) To assist in the building up of strong local Labour Parties for the carrying out of electoral organisation and work throughout the R.A.C.S. area; and (4) To set an example to other societies and so lead to the building up of a great united political movement to represent the modern trinity—the Trade Union, the Co-operative and Socialist Movements.

This gives a brief summary of the political organisation developed in the second largest British voluntary Co-operative Society, founded some eighty years ago by a number of Woolwich Royal Arsenal factory workers with a membership of 47 in 1869 and a trade of £444, which now compares with a trade in 1948 exceeding £14 million, a membership of 336,877 and over 8,000 employees. Further details may be obtained by those interested on application to the Political Department of the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society, Limited, Powis Street, Woolwich, S.E.18.

Do all your
key workers
read the
**LABOUR
ORGANISER?**

These Organisations are Proscribed

Party officials are continually writing to Head Office for an up-to-date list of Proscribed Organisations or for information about a particular organisation from whom they have received correspondence. Here are some points that may be helpful.

IN many instances the name of the particular organisation is not known to us, but through our Regional Secretaries, Press cuttings or our knowledge of the activities of certain individuals who are officers of the organisation, we are usually able to give guidance whether a party should associate itself with it or not.

What's in a Name?

Parties and individual members are often found to be giving support to outside bodies, ignorant that the organisation is proscribed. Generally speaking, members of the Labour Movement should refrain from associating with bodies about the origin, objects or activities of which there is the slightest suspicion. A name may often conceal the identity of the sponsoring body.

Divided loyalties only tend to spread confusion and usually the cause of these *ad hoc* organisations can be

better served through the normal democratic channels of the Labour Party.

The following is a list of Proscribed Organisations known to be in existence at the present time:

British Soviet Society.
British Soviet Friendship Houses, Ltd.
Common Wealth.
Communist Party of Great Britain.
Independent Socialist Party.
Labour Research Department.
Marx House.
Militant Labour League.
Scottish U.S.S.R. Society.
Women's Parliament.
University Labour Federation.
International Youth Council in Britain.
World Federation of Democratic Youth.

Membership of any of these organisations is not compatible with membership of the Labour Party.

It will be noted that a number of political organisations, in particular the main political parties, do not appear in this list but members of these organisations are also ineligible for membership of the Labour Party under Clause II paragraph (3) of the Party Constitution which reads "... Political organisations not affiliated to or associated under a National Agreement with the Party on January 1, 1946, having their own Programme, Principles and Policy for distinctive and separate propaganda, or possessing Branches in the Constituencies, or engaged in the promotion of Parliamentary or Local Government Candidatures, or owing allegiance to any political organisation situated abroad, shall be ineligible for affiliation to the Party ..."

Before associating with any organisation outside the Labour Movement, it seems right that we should ask ourselves the following questions:

- (1) Does it cut across Party policy?
 - (2) Does our machinery give
- (Continued on next page)*

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Points about Party Posters

Amendments to the new Control of Advertisement Regulations.

IN the September issue of the *Labour Organiser* the regulations on the Control of Advertisements were summarised and a circular was sent to all party secretaries setting out the requirements. Since that date a prayer has been tabled to annul the regulations. This prayer was withdrawn after the Minister had undertaken to amend certain parts and also cleared up one or two points of doubt.

These points and one amendment will ease matters somewhat as far as political parties are concerned.

The regulations are to be amended so that events of a political nature will enjoy fully the benefits of the specified classes of advertisements and there will be no need to determine that any event held under the auspices of a political party is either educational, cultural, social or recreational in character.

Consent of Owner

An interpretation has been given of the clause requiring the consent of the owner of the property or of the person entitled to give consent for the display of any advertisement. The person entitled to give consent is the tenant or occupier of the property or land. This means that if any party member or sympathiser wishes to display a party poster at his house which comes within the specified classes or is an election poster, he or she does not need to seek the permission of his landlord before doing so, neither is there any need to secure the express consent of the local planning authority.

Window Bills

There is no need to secure consent of the local planning authority for the display of window bills whatever category such bills might be in.

Letterpress, slogan posters, election posters and posters advertising a particular event such as a whist drive, dance, social, public meeting, debate, etc., can be shown within a window and for any period of time without securing consent of the local planning authority.

These new interpretations of the regulations should make things a good

deal easier for local parties if every possible advantage is taken of them.

This month sees the first number of "Advance," the new League of Youth magazine. With 16 pages and an attractive cover, many new features are introduced and lavish illustrations make it a lively publication worthy of a rapidly growing League.

(Continued from previous page)

opportunity for expressing the particular point of view?

(3) Do we know sufficient about the background of the organisation and its sponsors?

If the answers to any of these questions leave room for doubt . . . ASK HEAD OFFICE.

WIDE READERSHIP

As to "width" of circulation—can you beat this one? This letter appeared in the "Dudley New Citizen":—

"I thought you would like to know what happens to my 'New Citizen,' of which I am a regular reader. I get mine at work, and leave it on the boss's desk till dinner-time. It is read by the boss and his secretary before I see it. While we are in the works canteen I read it, and my pals listen to bits I read to them. The wife reads it at night, and then passes it on to the folk next door on either side. They give it back to us when they have seen it, and I post it to my brother in London. He sends it on to my mother, who lives in Dover. She always forwards it to her brother, who is a great Labour worker in Melbourne. So you see, how your paper is appreciated and how it gets about a bit.—Yours, etc.,

SATISFIED READER."

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LEAGUE OF YOUTH BADGES—stud and brooch *Post free! 2s. each, £1 1s. per dozen*

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